

CLIENT BULLETIN

November 2017

Medication Monitoring for Mental Health Illness

Psychiatrists and primary care physicians managing psychiatric problems should incorporate drug testing into their routine treatment plans. Psychostimulants prescribed for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or depression, and benzodiazepines, prescribed for anxiety disorders and other conditions, are subject to misuse, addiction, and diversion. Physicians and other professionals with prescribing authority too often initiate authorizations for these classes of drugs without conducting even cursory screening for risk of misuse. This failure of vigilance contributes to the widespread misuse and diversion of these drugs. Patients provided with prescriptions for controlled substances including stimulants, sedative-hypnotics including benzodiazepines, and opioids are at risk of using illicit drugs and/or alcohol along with their prescription medications, putting their health and safety at risk as well as posing a risk of diversion.

Adolescents and young adults, who are more prone to poor judgment and poor impulse control, are at higher risk for the development of addiction when they do use drugs of abuse. In addition, there is a high level of psychiatric and addiction comorbidity in these age groups with patients often minimizing or denying drug use to their physicians. For this reason, it is appropriate to consider periodic random drug testing for all psychiatric patients, and especially young patients and those with a history of substance use disorders, particularly when they have been prescribed psychostimulants and benzodiazepines. This should become part of the standard treatment planning of private psychiatric practices, community health (and mental health) centers, and other primary care practices where patients are prescribed psychopharmacological agents with the potential for misuse.

Pacific Toxicology Laboratories has expanded its test menu to assist psychiatrists and primary care physicians managing psychiatric problems to provide high-quality health care when psychostimulants medications are prescribed.

Test Code	Test Name	Cut Off (ng/mL)	Method	CPT Code
615	TCAs - Desipramine, Amitriptyline, Nortriptyline, Doxepine, Desmethyldoxepin, Imipramine	100	LCMS/MS	G0480
661	SSRIs - Citalopram, Desmethylcitalopram, Duloxetine, Fluoxetine, Norfluoxetine, Paroxetine, Sertraline, Escitalopram)	100	LCMS/MS	G0480
690	Antidepressants - Venlafaxine, Desmethylvenlafaxine, Trazadone, Bupropion	100	LCMS/MS	G0480
680	Antipsychotics - Lurasidone, Ziprasidone, Asenapine, Risperidone, Aripiprazole, Quetiapine, Olanzapine, Clozapine	100	LCMS/MS	G0480

This test offering will address the needs of our psychiatrists and primary care physicians managing psychiatric problems. For more information, please contact your sales representative. Our technical staff is also available for consultation, as needed.

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